IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 97 and 103, amend claims 1, 29, 30, 37, 52, 54, 59, 63, 65, 70, 89, 91, 92, 94, 95, 96, 98, 102 and 104, and add new claims 115-119 as indicated below.

1. (Amended) An orthopedic implant assembly, comprising

a) a stabilizing element having an anterior surface, a posterior surface, and at least one bore, the bore having a first opening in the anterior surface, a second opening in the posterior surface smaller than the first opening, and a transverse passageway extending from the first opening to the second opening;

b) a biased stopping member defining at least in part a reversibly expandable passageway having a smaller diameter configuration and a larger diameter configuration and a posterior stopping surface; and

c) a securing element having an elongated body, and a head at one end of the body and integral therewith, the head having a maximum diameter greater than the smaller diameter configuration of the passageway defined by the biased stopping member and greater than the second opening in the stabilizing element, so that the head is retained by the posterior stopping surface of the stopping member within the transverse passageway between the biased stopping member and the second opening in the stabilizing element.

2. (Original) The assembly of claim 1 wherein the biased stopping member comprises a collar defining a passageway, enlargeable from an unexpanded

inner diameter to an expanded inner diameter, wherein the head of the securing element has a maximum diameter greater than the unexpanded inner diameter of the collar and less than the expanded inner diameter of the collar.

3. (Original) The assembly of claim 2 wherein the head of the securing element has a curved posterior surface which has a minimum outer diameter smaller than the unexpanded inner diameter of the collar, configured to be displaceable posteriorly of the collar through the passageway of the collar from an anterior to a posterior surface thereof.

4. (Original) The assembly of claim 2 wherein the bore has a groove in an anterior portion of the transverse passageway having a diameter and a height, and wherein the collar is a reversibly expandable annular collar seated in the groove, the collar having an expanded outer diameter, and an unexpanded outer diameter which is less than the diameter of the groove and greater than a diameter of the transverse passageway.

5. (Original) The assembly of claim 4 wherein the head of the securing element has a curved posterior surface which has a minimum outer diameter smaller than the unexpanded inner diameter of the collar, and which is configured to contact the collar anterior surface and expand the collar as the head is displaced posteriorly through the collar passageway.

6. (Original) The assembly of claim 2 wherein the collar is secured to an anterior section of the transverse passageway, and has a plurality of slots and

circumferentially spaced members, the circumferentially spaced members having a deflected configuration defining the expanded inner diameter of the collar.

7. (Original) The assembly of claim 6 wherein the head of the securing element has a curved posterior surface which has a minimum outer diameter smaller than the unexpanded inner diameter of the collar, and which is configured to contact the collar anterior surface and deflect the circumferentially spaced members away from a longitudinal axis of the transverse passageway as the head is displaced posteriorly through the collar passageway.

8. (Original) The assembly of claim 6 wherein the collar has an anterior surface which tapers toward a center of the transverse passageway.

9. (Original) The assembly of claim 3 wherein a posterior portion of the transverse passageway is curved to conform to the curved posterior surface of the head.

10. (Original) The assembly of claim 1 wherein the head of the securing element is longitudinally displaceable within the transverse passageway between a posterior surface of the biased stopping member and the second opening in the posterior surface of the stabilizing element.

11. (Original) The assembly of claim 10 wherein the body of the securing element has a diameter smaller than the second opening in the stabilizing element, and the securing element may be angularly displaced within the transverse passageway and the second opening in the stabilizing element.

12. (Original) The assembly of claim 1 wherein the stabilizing element includes at least two bores.

13. (Original) The assembly of claim 1 wherein the stabilizing element is configured to conform to and extend between at least two bone segments.

14. (Original) The assembly of claim 13 wherein the stabilizing element has a curved surface.

15. (Original) The assembly of claim 1 wherein the stabilizing element is selected from the group consisting of rods and plates.

16. (Original) The assembly of claim 1 wherein the securing element is selected from the group consisting of screws and nails.

17. (Original) The assembly of claim 2 wherein the collar is formed of an elastically deformable material.

18. (Original) The assembly of claim 2 wherein the collar is formed of a material selected from the group consisting of titanium and superelastic material.

19. (Original) The assembly of claim 2 wherein the collar has a posterior surface perpendicular to a longitudinal axis of the transverse passageway.

20. (Original) The assembly of claim 4 wherein the collar has a height less than the height of the groove.

21. (Original) A method of attaching an orthopedic implant assembly to a bone of a patient, comprising

a) positioning a stabilizing element against a surface of the patient's bone, the stabilizing element having an anterior surface, a posterior surface, and at least one bore, the bore having a first opening in the anterior surface, a second opening in the posterior surface smaller than the first opening, and a transverse passageway extending from the first opening to the second opening, and a biased stopping member within the bore and defining at least in part a reversibly expandable passageway having a smaller diameter configuration and a larger diameter configuration;

b) providing a securing element having an elongated body, and a head at one end of the body and integral therewith, the head having a maximum diameter greater than the smaller diameter configuration of the passageway defined by the biased stopping member and greater than the second opening in the stabilizing element, so that the head is retained within the transverse passageway between the biased stopping member and the second opening in the stabilizing element;

c) positioning the body of the securing element in the transverse passageway and posteriorly advancing the head of the securing element within the passageway defined by the biased stopping member and thereby displacing the biased stopping member to form the larger diameter configuration passageway defined thereby; and

d) attaching the stabilizing element to the bone by advancing the head of the securing element posteriorly of the biased stopping member so that the passageway defined thereby returns to the smaller diameter configuration, to position the head within a posterior section of the transverse passageway between the biased stopping member and the second opening in the stabilizing element, and to position the body of the securing element within the patient's bone, so that the securing element is attached to the bone and is retained within the. posterior section of the transverse passageway of the stabilizing element.

22. (Original) The method of claim 21 including, after the head of the securing element is positioned between the biased stopping member and the second opening in the stabilizing element, the step of longitudinally and angularly displacing the head of the securing element within the transverse passageway, so that the body of the securing element is positioned at an angle within the patient's bone relative to the surface of the bone.

23. (Original) An orthopedic implant assembly, comprising

a) a stabilizing element having an anterior surface, a posterior surface, and at least one bore, the bore having a first opening in the anterior surface, a second opening in the posterior surface smaller than the first opening, and a transverse passageway extending from the first opening to the second opening, and a stopping member at an anterior section of the transverse passageway having a posterior stopping surface; and

b) a securing element having an elongated body and a head secured to one end of the body, the head having a reversibly compressed configuration with a compressed diameter less than the diameter of the first opening and an uncompressed configuration with a diameter greater than a diameter of the stopping member and the second opening, so that the head of the securing element is retained within the transverse passageway between the posterior stopping surface of the stopping member and the second opening in the stabilizing element.

24. (Original) The assembly of claim 23 wherein the head of the securing element is configured to be displaceable posteriorly through the stopping member from an anterior to a posterior surface thereof.

25. (Original) The assembly of claim 23 wherein the head of the securing element has a plurality of slots and circumferentially disposed members; the circumferentially disposed members having posterior ends secured to the body of the securing element, and anterior ends radially moveable toward a longitudinal axis of the head of the securing element to form the compressed configuration and away from the longitudinal axis to form the uncompressed configuration.

26. (Original) The assembly of claim 23 wherein the stopping member is at the anterior end of the transverse passageway and defines the first opening in the stabilizing element.

27. (Original) The assembly of claim 23 wherein the stopping member has a posterior surface perpendicular to a longitudinal axis of the transverse passageway.

28. (Original) A method of attaching an orthopedic implant assembly to a bone of a patient, comprising

a) positioning a stabilizing element against a surface of the patient's bone, the stabilizing element having an anterior surface, a posterior surface, and at least one bore, the bore having a first opening in the anterior surface, a second opening in the posterior surface smaller than the first opening, and a transverse passageway extending from the first opening to the second opening, and a stopping member at an anterior section of the transverse passageway having a posterior stopping surface;

b) providing a securing element having an elongated body and a head secured to one end of the body, the head having a reversibly compressed configuration with a compressed diameter less than a diameter of the first opening and an uncompressed configuration with a diameter greater than the diameter of the stopping member and the second opening, so that the head of the securing element is retained within the transverse passageway between the posterior stopping surface of the stopping member and the second opening in the stabilizing element;

c) positioning the body of the securing element in the transverse passageway and posteriorly advancing the head of the securing element within a passageway defined by the stopping member and thereby compressing the diameter of the head of the securing element; and

d) attaching the stabilizing element to the bone by advancing the head of the securing element posteriorly of the stopping member so that the diameter of the head of the securing element returns to the uncompressed configuration, to position the head within a posterior section of the transverse passageway between the posterior stopping surface of the stopping member and the second opening in the stabilizing element and the body of the securing element within the patient's bone, so that the securing element is attached to the bone and is retained within the posterior section of the transverse passageway of the stabilizing element.

29. (Twice Amended) An orthopedic attachment assembly, comprising:

a. an elongated securing member having an enlarged integral portion with a length, a posterior surface and a transverse dimension;

b. an attachment member which has an anterior surface and a posterior surface and which has at least one bore extending through the attachment member from the anterior surface to the posterior surface and is configured to receive the securing member, the bore having an anterior bore portion, a posterior bore portion having at least one transverse dimension smaller than the transverse dimension of the enlarged integral portion of the securing member to facilitate retention of the enlarged integral portion of the securing member within the posterior bore portion; and

c. a stopping member which has a posterior stopping surface, a first configuration within the bore which allows passage of the securing member into the posterior bore portion with the enlarged integral portion of the securing member disposed within the posterior bore portion posterior to the stopping member and a second configuration within the bore which has smaller transverse dimensions than the first configuration to facilitate retention of the enlarged integral portion of the securing member within the posterior bore portion of the attachment member by the posterior stopping surface of the stopping member.

30. (Twice Amended) The attachment assembly of claim 29 wherein the stopping

the second configuration of the stopping member has inner transverse dimensions that are smaller than transverse dimensions of the enlarged integral portion of the securing member to facilitate retention of the enlarged integral portion of the securing member within the posterior bore portion and

the first configuration of the stopping member has inner transverse dimensions that are greater than transverse dimensions of the enlarged integral portion of the securing member to allow passage of the enlarged integral portion of the securing member into the posterior bore portion.

31. (Pending) The attachment assembly of claim 29 wherein the securing member having an enlarged integral portion is slidably disposed within the bore.

32. (Cancelled)

33. (Pending) The attachment assembly of claim 42 wherein the posterior surface of the enlarged integral portion of the securing member is configured at least in part to conform to the posterior surface of the posterior bore portion to facilitate angulation of the securing member within the posterior bore portion.

34. (Pending) The attachment assembly of claim 33 wherein the posterior surface of the posterior bore portion has a bowl shape.

35. (Pending) The attachment assembly of claim 34 wherein the bowl-shaped posterior surface of the posterior bore portion at least in part is a hemispherical zone.

36. (Pending) The attachment assembly of claim 29 wherein the stopping member is a biased stopping member.

37. (Twice Amended) The attachment assembly of claim 36 wherein the biased stopping member is a collar having at least in part a passageway enlargeable from a first inner dimension to a second inner dimension by the passage of the enlarged integral portion of the securing member therethrough.

38. (Pending) The attachment assembly of claim 37 wherein the bore has a groove which receives the collar.

39. (Pending) The attachment assembly of claim 37 wherein the enlarged integral portion of the securing member has a curved posterior surface which is configured to contact an anterior surface of the collar and expand the collar as the enlarged integral portion of the securing member is displaced posteriorly through the collar passageway.

40. (Pending) The attachment assembly of claim 39 wherein the anterior surface of the collar tapers inwardly toward the collar passageway.

41. (Cancelled)

42. (Pending) The attachment assembly of claim 31 wherein a portion of the securing member posterior to the enlarged integral portion has transverse dimensions sufficiently smaller than the transverse dimensions of the posterior bore portion so the securing member may be angularly displaced within the bore.

43. (Pending) The attachment assembly of claim 29 wherein the attachment member includes at least two bores.

44. (Pending) The attachment assembly of claim 29 wherein the attachment member is configured to conform to and extend between at least two bone segments.

45. (Pending) The attachment assembly of claim 29 wherein the posterior surface of the attachment member is at least in part a concave surface.

46. (Pending) The attachment assembly of claim 29 wherein the attachment member is selected from the group consisting of rods and plates.

47. (Pending) The attachment assembly of claim 31 wherein the securing member is selected from the group consisting of screws and nails.

48. (Pending) The attachment assembly of claim 37 wherein the collar is formed of an elastically deformable material.

49. (Pending) The attachment assembly of claim 37 wherein the collar is formed of a material selected from the group consisting of titanium and superelastic material.

50. (Pending) The attachment assembly of claim 37 wherein the collar has a posterior surface perpendicular to a longitudinal axis of the bore extending through the attachment member.

51. (Pending) The assembly of claim 4 wherein the collar has a height less than the height of the groove.

52. (Twice Amended) A method of attaching an orthopedic implant assembly to a bone of a patient, comprising

a) providing

a securing member with an elongated body and an enlarged integral portion,

an attachment member which has an anterior surface and a posterior surface and which has at least one bore extending through the attachment member from the anterior surface to the posterior surface and is configured to receive the securing member, the bore having an anterior bore portion, and a posterior bore portion with at least one transverse dimension smaller than transverse dimensions of the anterior bore portion, and

a stopping member which reduces a transverse configuration of the bore to retain the enlarged integral portion of the securing member within the posterior bore portion of the attachment member;

b) positioning the attachment member with at least part of the posterior surface thereof against a surface of the patient's bone;

c) the enlarged integral portion of the securing member having a maximum dimension greater than the smaller transverse dimension of the posterior bore portion to retain the enlarged integral portion of the securing member within the posterior bore portion; and

d) attaching the securing member to the patient's bone by advancing the securing member within the bore of the attachment member until the enlarged integral portion of the securing member passes the stopping member and is disposed in the posterior bore portion.

53. (Pending) The method of claim 52 wherein the securing member is angularly displaceable within the posterior bore portion so that the securing member may be secured within the patient's bone at an angle relative to a longitudinal axis of the bore.

54. (Twice Amended) An orthopedic implant assembly, comprising:

a) a securing element with an elongated body and an enlarged head;

b) an attachment member comprising

an attachment component which has at least one bore configured to receive the securing element, the bore having a first bore portion, and a second bore portion having at least one smaller transverse dimension than transverse dimensions of the first bore portion;

a stopping surface which reduces a transverse configuration of the first bore portion to retain the enlarged head of the securing

element within the bore of the attachment member between the stopping surface and the second bore portion, and

a third bore portion between the stopping surface and the second bore portion having a surface configured to conform at least in part to part of the enlarged head of the securing element received by the bore; and

c) the enlarged head of the securing element having a reversibly compressed configuration with transverse dimensions less than the reduced transverse configuration of the first bore portion formed at least in part by the stopping surface and having an uncompressed configuration with a transverse dimension greater than the reduced transverse configuration of the first bore portion and the second bore portion, so that the head of the securing element is retained within the bore between the stopping surface and the second bore portion in the attachment component.

55. (Pending) The implant assembly of claim 54 wherein the head of the securing element is configured to be displaceable posteriorly through the stopping surface from an anterior to a posterior portion thereof.

56. (Pending) The implant assembly of claim 54 wherein the head of the securing element has a plurality of slots and circumferentially disposed members having posterior ends secured to the body of the securing element, and anterior ends radially moveable toward a longitudinal axis of the head of the securing element to form the

compressed configuration and away from the longitudinal axis to form the uncompressed configuration.

57. (Pending) The implant assembly of claim 54 wherein the stopping surface is at the anterior end of the bore and defines a first opening in the attachment component.

58. (Pending) The implant assembly of claim 54 wherein the stopping surface is perpendicular to a longitudinal axis of the bore.

59. (Pending) A method of attaching an orthopedic implant assembly to a bone of a patient, comprising

a) providing an attachment member comprising

an attachment component which has at least one bore configured to receive a securing element with an enlarged head, the bore having a first bore portion, and a second bore portion having at least one smaller transverse dimension than transverse dimensions of the first bore portion,

a stopping surface which reduces a transverse configuration of the first bore portion to retain the enlarged head of a securing element within the bore of the attachment member between the stopping surface and the second bore portion;

b) positioning the attachment member against a surface of the patient's bone;

c) providing a securing element having an elongated body and an enlarged head at one end of the body which has a reversibly compressed

configuration with transverse dimensions less than the reduced transverse configuration of the first bore portion formed by the stopping surface and which has an uncompressed configuration with a transverse dimension greater than the reduced transverse configuration of the second bore portion, so that the head of the securing element is retained within the second bore portion in the attachment component; and

d) attaching the securing element to the patient's bone by advancing the securing element within the bore of the attachment component until the enlarged head of the securing element is in the second bore portion.

60. (Pending) The attachment assembly of claim 29, wherein

a. the enlarged integral portion of the elongated securing member has a curved posterior surface; and

b. the posterior bore portion has a curved posterior surface configured to conform at least in part to part of the curved posterior surface of the enlarged integral portion of the securing member received by the bore.

61. (Cancelled)

62. (Cancelled)

63. (Twice Amended) An orthopedic implant assembly, comprising:

a. a stabilizing element having an anterior surface, a posterior surface, and at least one bore extending through the stabilizing element from the anterior surface to the posterior surface and the bore having an anterior bore portion and a posterior bore

portion which has a posterior opening with a transverse dimension smaller than the transverse dimension of the anterior bore portion;

b. a securing element which is configured to be slidably disposed within the bore of the stabilizing element and which has an elongated body and an enlarged integral portion; and

c. a stopping member which is at least partially disposed within the bore of the stabilizing element, which has a posterior stopping surface, a first configuration within the bore allowing passage of the securing element into the posterior bore portion with the enlarged integral portion of the securing member disposed in the posterior bore portion posterior to the stopping member and a second configuration within the bore which has smaller transverse dimensions than the first configuration to facilitate retention of the enlarged integral portion of the securing member within the posterior bore portion of the stabilizing element by the posterior stopping surface of the stopping member.

64. (Pending) The assembly of claim 63 wherein the stopping member is configured to prevent the back-out of the securing element through the bore of the stabilizing element.

65. (Twice Amended) The assembly of claim 63 wherein the stopping member is biased to the second configuration.

66. (Pending) The assembly of claim 65 wherein the stopping member comprises a biased collar having a passageway therethrough.

67. (Pending) The assembly of claim 63 wherein the enlarged integral portion of the securing element has a curved posterior surface.

68. (Pending) The assembly of claim 66 wherein the bore has a groove in an anterior portion thereof configured to receive the biased collar, and wherein the biased collar is configured to be reversibly expandable when seated in the groove.

69. (Pending) The assembly of claim 68 wherein the curved posterior surface of the enlarged integral portion of the securing element is configured to expand the collar as the enlarged integral portion of the securing element is displaced posteriorly through the collar passageway.

70. (Twice Amended) The assembly of claim 69 wherein the curved posterior surface of the enlarged integral portion of the securing element has a minimum transverse dimension smaller than a transverse dimension of the passageway of the unexpanded collar, and which is configured to contact an anterior surface of the collar and deflect the collar away from a longitudinal axis of the collar passageway as the enlarged integral portion of the securing element is displaced posteriorly through the collar passageway.

71. (Pending) The assembly of claim 70 wherein the collar has an anterior surface which tapers toward the collar passageway.

72. (Pending) The assembly of claim 71 wherein the posterior bore portion has a curved posterior surface that is configured to receive at least in part the curved posterior surface of the enlarged integral portion of the securing element.

73. (Pending) The assembly of claim 63 wherein the enlarged integral portion of the securing element is configured to be longitudinally displaceable within the posterior bore portion of the bore of the stabilizing element.

74. (Pending) The assembly of claim 10 wherein the body of the securing

element has a transverse dimension smaller than the second opening of the stabilizing element, and wherein the securing element may be angularly displaced within a posterior portion of the bore of the stabilizing element.

75. (Pending) The assembly of claim 1 wherein the stabilizing element includes at least two bores.

76. (Pending) The assembly of claim 1 wherein the stabilizing element is configured to conform to and extend between at least two bone segments.

77. (Pending) The assembly of claim 13 wherein the stabilizing element has a concave posterior surface.

78. (Pending) The assembly of claim 10 wherein the stabilizing element is selected from the group consisting of rods and plates.

79. (Pending) The assembly of claim 10 wherein the securing element is selected from the group consisting of screws and nails.

80. (Cancelled)

81. (Cancelled)

82. (Cancelled)

83. (Cancelled)

84. (Pending) An orthopedic implant assembly, comprising:

a. a stabilizing element having an anterior surface, a posterior surface, and at least one bore, the bore having an anterior bore portion, a posterior bore portion with a transverse dimension smaller than a transverse dimension of the anterior portion,

b. a stopping member at the anterior portion of the bore; and

c. a securing element having an elongated body and a head secured to the body which is reversibly compressible with a compressed transverse dimension less than the transverse dimension of the anterior portion of the bore and with an uncompressed transverse dimension greater than an inner transverse dimension of the stopping member and the posterior portion of the bore, so that the head of the securing element is retained between the stopping member and the smaller transverse dimension of the posterior portion of the bore of the stabilizing element.

85. (Pending) The implant assembly of claim 84 wherein the head of the securing element is configured to be displaceable posteriorly through the stopping member from an anterior to a posterior surface thereof.

86. (Pending) The implant assembly of claim 84 wherein the head of the securing element has a plurality of slots and circumferentially disposed members, the circumferentially disposed members having posterior ends secured to the body of the securing element, and anterior ends radially moveable toward a longitudinal axis of the head of the securing element to form the compressed configuration and away from the longitudinal axis to form the uncompressed configuration.

87. (Cancelled)

88. (Pending) The assembly of claim 84 wherein the stopping member has a posterior surface perpendicular to a longitudinal axis of the bore.

89. (Twice Amended) An orthopedic implant assembly which has a stabilizing element having an anterior surface, a posterior surface, and at least one bore extending through the stabilizing element from the anterior surface to the posterior

surface with an anterior bore portion, a posterior bore portion having a posterior opening with a transverse dimension smaller than a transverse dimension of the anterior bore portion and which has a securing element having an elongated body and an enlarged integral portion with a maximum transverse dimension greater than a transverse dimension of the posterior opening of the posterior bore portion in the stabilizing element, characterized by:

a resilient radially deflectable member which has a posterior stopping surface, which is configured to engage a surface of the assembly and which has a first configuration that allows the enlarged integral portion of the securing element to pass into the posterior bore portion and a second configuration that retains the enlarged integral portion of the securing element within the posterior bore portion by the posterior stopping surface and prevent the back-out of the securing element through the bore of the stabilizing element.

90. (Pending) The assembly of claim 89 wherein the radially deflectable member comprises a biased collar.

91. (Twice Amended) The assembly of claim 90 wherein the biased collar is elastically deformable to the first configuration.

92. (Amended) The assembly of claim 91 wherein the ~~second~~ first configuration is an expanded configuration.

93. (Pending) The assembly of claim 91 wherein the biased collar extends at least partially within the bore of the stabilizing element so that the enlarged integral portion of the securing element is retained within the posterior bore portion.

94. (Twice Amended) An orthopedic implant assembly which has a stabilizing element having an anterior surface, a posterior surface, and at least one bore extending through the stabilizing element from the anterior surface to the posterior surface with an anterior bore portion, a posterior bore portion having a posterior opening with a transverse dimension smaller than a transverse dimension of the anterior bore portion and which has a securing element having an elongated body and an enlarged integral head with a maximum transverse dimension greater than a transverse dimension of the posterior opening of the posterior bore portion in the stabilizing element, characterized by:

a resilient longitudinally deflectable member which is configured to engage a surface of the assembly to retain the enlarged integral head of securing element within the posterior bore portion and prevent the back-out of the securing element through the bore of the stabilizing element.

95. (Twice Amended) The orthopedic implant assembly of claim 94 wherein the resilient longitudinally deflectable member deflects longitudinally when the securing element is advanced posteriorly through the bore of the stabilizing element.

96. (Twice Amended) An orthopedic implant assembly, comprising:

a. a stabilizing element having an anterior surface, a posterior surface, and at least one bore extending through the stabilizing element from the anterior surface to the posterior surface with an anterior bore portion which has a transverse dimension, a posterior bore portion which has a posterior opening with a transverse dimension smaller than the transverse dimension of the anterior bore portion;

b. a securing element having an elongated body and an enlarged integral portion; and

c. a biased stopping member which has a posterior stopping surface, which is elastically deformable to a first configuration that has a first transverse dimension that allows the securing element to pass into the posterior bore portion with the enlarged integral portion of the securing element disposed posterior to the biased stopping member a second configuration that has a second transverse dimension smaller than the first transverse dimension so as to retain the enlarged integral portion of the securing element within the posterior bore portion by the stopping surface.

97. (Cancelled)

98. (Twice Amended) The orthopedic implant assembly of claim 96 wherein the biased stopping member elastically returns from the first configuration back to the second configuration.

99. (Pending) The assembly of claim 96 wherein the biased stopping member comprises a collar.

100. (Pending) The assembly of claim 99 wherein the biased collar is disposed in part within a recess of the stabilizing element.

101. (Pending) The assembly of claim 100 wherein the recess is a groove configured to slidably receive the biased collar.

102. (Twice Amended) The attachment assembly of claim 29, wherein the stopping member is a biased stopping member which reduces a transverse

configuration of the anterior bore portion to retain the enlarged integral portion of the securing member within the posterior bore portion of the attachment member.

103. (Cancelled)

104. (Twice Amended) The attachment assembly of claim 102 wherein the biased stopping member is elastically deformed by the passage of the enlarged integral portion of the securing member.

105. (Pending) The attachment assembly of clam 104 wherein the biased stopping member resiliently returns to the first configuration after passage of the enlarged integral portion of the securing member.

106. (Pending) The attachment assembly of claim 31 wherein a posterior surface of the posterior bore portion is configured to conform at least in part to the posterior surface of the enlarged integral portion of the securing member so as to facilitate angular displacement within the posterior bore portion.

107. (Pending) An orthopedic implant assembly suitable for attachment to a bone which has a stabilizing element having an anterior surface, a posterior surface and at least one bore extending through the stabilizing element from the anterior surface to the posterior surface with an anterior bore portion and a posterior bore portion having a transverse dimension smaller than a transverse dimension of the anterior bore portion, which has a stopping member having a passageway therethrough at an anterior bore portion and which has a securing element having an elongated body and an enlarged integral portion with a maximum transverse dimension greater than a transverse dimension of the posterior bore portion in the stabilizing element, characterized by:

the enlarged portion of the securing element

being at least in part reversibly compressible from a first configuration with a first transverse dimension to a second configuration with a second smaller transverse dimension that is less than the smallest transverse dimension of the passageway through the stopping member,

the compressible part of the enlarged integral portion of the securing element being biased towards the first configuration,

the enlarged integral portion of the securing element being configured to contact the stopping member so as to compress the compressible part of the enlarged integral portion of the securing element to its compressed configuration as the enlarged integral portion is displaced posteriorly through the stopping member passageway,

whereby the assembly can be attached to the bone with a single motion of advancing the securing element through the stopping member passageway and into the bone.

108. (Pending) The assembly of claim 107 wherein the compressible part of the enlarged integral portion of the securing element comprises a biased collar.

109. (Pending) The assembly of claim 108 wherein the biased collar is elastically deformable to the second configuration.

110. (Pending) The assembly of claim 108 wherein the biased collar extends at least partially within the bore of the stabilizing element so that the enlarged integral portion of the securing element is retained within the posterior bore portion.

111. (Pending) The assembly of claim 107 wherein the compressible part of

the enlarged integral portion of the securing element comprises at least one circumferentially disposed member.

112. (Pending) The assembly of claim 111 wherein the at least one circumferentially disposed member has a posterior end secured to the securing element.

113. (Pending) The assembly of claim 112 wherein the securing element comprises a plurality of circumferentially disposed members having posterior ends secured to the securing element.

114. (Pending) The orthopedic attachment assembly of claim 29 wherein the posterior bore portion has a length sufficiently greater than the length of the enlarged integral portion of the securing member so that the enlarged integral portion of the securing member is longitudinally displaceable within the posterior bore portion when retained therein.

115. (New) An orthopedic attachment assembly, comprising:

a. an elongated securing member having an enlarged integral portion with a length, a posterior surface and a transverse dimension and a shaft extending from the enlarged integral portion configured to be secured within bone;

b. an attachment member which has an anterior surface and a posterior surface and which has at least one bore extending through the attachment member from the anterior surface to the posterior surface and is configured to receive the securing member, the bore having an anterior bore portion, a posterior bore portion

having at least one transverse dimension smaller than the transverse dimension of the enlarged integral portion of the securing member to retain the enlarged integral portion of the securing member within the posterior bore portion; and

c. a stopping member which has a posterior stopping surface, a first configuration that allows the enlarged integral portion of the securing member to pass into the posterior bore portion and a second configuration that facilitates retention of the enlarged integral portion of the securing member within the posterior bore portion by the posterior stopping surface and which defines at least in part a length of the posterior bore portion that is longer than the length of the enlarged integral portion of the securing member to allow displacement of the enlarged integral portion of the securing member within the posterior bore portion.

116. (New) The orthopedic attachment assembly of claim 115 wherein the securing member has a portion posterior to the integral head that has a transverse dimension smaller than a transverse dimension of an opening in the posterior bore portion to provide angular displacement of the securing member within the posterior bore portion.

117. (New) The orthopedic attachment assembly of claim 115 wherein the first configuration of the stopping member has a transverse dimension that is larger than the transverse dimension of the stopping member is the second configuration.

118. (New) The orthopedic attachment assembly of claim 116 wherein the enlarged integral portion of the securing member has a maximum transverse dimension which is greater than the second transverse dimension of the stopping member.

119. (New) The orthopedic attachment assembly of claim 118 wherein the enlarged integral portion of the securing member has a tapered posterior surface configured to expand the stopping member upon the passage therethrough.